

Testimony of Jacqueline D’Louhy, LCSW, Youth and Family Services Coordinator for the  
Town of New Canaan

**Concerning funding for Regional Action Councils in**

H.B. No. 6824 - AN ACT CONCERNING THE STATE BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM ENDING  
JUNE THIRTIETH 2017, AND MAKING APPROPRIATIONS THEREFOR AND OTHER  
PROVISIONS RELATED TO REVENUE.

*Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services - March 6, 2015*

Senator Bye, Representative Walker, Senator Gerratana, Representative Dillon and  
members of the Appropriations subcommittee, my name is Jacqueline D’Louhy. I am  
offering testimony in strong opposition to the proposed cuts to the regional action councils.

In New Canaan, Communities 4 Action (formerly Lower Fairfield County Regional Action  
Council) has been instrumental in **PROVIDING SUPPORT** by:

- Hosting **quarterly council meetings** as an opportunity to network, learn, share ideas and work collectively on regional collaborations to strengthen local initiatives
- **Convening regional meetings** to support substance abuse prevention, smoking cessation, supports for those living with mental illness, dating violence awareness, gambling awareness and local youth officers and School Resource Officer networking
- Continual **connecting of people, programs and places**
- **Representing regional needs** on numerous local (Local Prevention Councils) regional (SWRMHB) and state groups (e.g. DMHAS Advisory Board, Connecticut Prevention Network) and work groups (e.g. Opioid Overdose Prevention Workgroup)

**The Communities 4 Action has provided consistent EDUCATION and AWARENESS**

- In collaboration with community partners, organized **presentations on Alcohol and drug abuse prevention and other risky behaviors** to parents (in English and Spanish), Faith Based communities, physicians, youth and older adult providers, library staff, realtors, mental health and substance abuse treatment providers, colleges,
- Created and/or promoted **Public Campaigns** – Lock Your Meds (created), Eat Dinner with Your Family (Supported), Asset and Alcohol Awareness month, 30 Days of Family
- Organized **forums** on underage drinking, suicide prevention
- Developed and disseminated **“Power of Parents” on alcohol, marijuana, Rx Drugs (English and Spanish)**
- **Ongoing email updates** on events, resources and research on ATODG and related topics
- Development and distribution of **extensive list of Behavioral Services and Supports**

**And has been successful in REDUCING BARRIERS/ENHANCING ACCESS (Improving systems and processes) in New Canaan with:**

**Medication Drop Boxes**

- Spearheaded and coordinated **medication drop box pilot** which are now in 57 communities.
- Help organize biannual medication turn in events in New Canaan and Stamford. *Over 2500 pounds* of unused and unwanted medications have been collected in our region.

**Public Policy Development**

- Spearheaded a public policy that now allows **EMTs and Police** who are trained as Emergency Medical Personnel (EMR) to carry and dispense Narcan; a drug used to

reverse opioid overdose deaths. Police and EMTs in our region have been trained and some have used narcan.

**And lastly, Communities 4 Action is necessary to help our county continuously advocate and support behavioral health prevention, intervention and treatment needs.**

Thank you for your time in this serious and sensitive matter,

***Jacqueline D'Louhy***

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